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<http://www.house.gov/pallone>

FRANK PALLONE, JR.

6TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3006

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July 8, 2013

The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
Acting Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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Dear Acting Chairwoman Clyburn:

I am writing to bring to your attention an issue of critical concern to the state of New Jersey: recent actions by WWOR-TV, Channel 9 in New Jersey, to cancel its 10 pm half-hour of news with absolutely no notice to its viewers.

As you are no doubt aware, WWOR is the state's only commercial high-powered station. Meanwhile, because the state doesn't have a designated market area or DMA, its nearly 9 million residents are forced to share two out-of-state DMAs. This means WWOR is our constituents' only ability to get true local news coverage.

Unfortunately, despite this reality, WWOR has failed for over a decade to live up to its broadcasting obligations to New Jersey. Studies have shown that WWOR has provided less coverage of New Jersey politics than most of the New York-based television stations and has failed to provide adequate coverage of New Jersey news and public affairs. In addition, since purchasing WWOR in 2001, News Corporation, now 21st Century Fox, has done everything they can to avoid any commitment to serve as a truly New Jersey station.

Now, WWOR has pulled the plug on the only newscast the station had left. This action deserves immediate enforcement by your agency. In fact, considering the license renewal application of WWOR is pending before the FCC, I believe that the current license should be revoked until you can place additional conditions on the station to ensure that WWOR is both based in New Jersey and provides local news coverage to the state.

The late Senator Frank Lautenberg had repeatedly called upon your Commission to ask that you hold WWOR accountable to its licensure requirements in New Jersey. He also asked that you conclude your investigation regarding potential misrepresentations included in their license renewal application. None of which the FCC has done to date.

As a member of the Committee of jurisdiction with oversight over broadcast issues and the FCC, I have followed WWOR closely. Now, I intend to continue the work of the Senator to ensure that WWOR does not get away with these irresponsible actions.

I urge you to take serious and immediate action against WWOR. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Frank Pallone Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress



Mignon L. Clyburn
Acting Chairwoman

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

August 22, 2013

The Honorable Frank Pallone
U.S. House of Representatives
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pallone:

Thank you for your letter expressing concern about WWOR-TV and the Commission's review of issues associated with its license renewal. Your letter will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

This proceeding has presented a number of complex issues and allegations for the Commission to consider in the context of the WWOR-TV license renewal. As you know, WWOR's license renewal was challenged by parties concerned that the station has failed to serve the citizens of New Jersey as required by its license. WWOR responds that the Petitioners have failed to take into account all of the public affairs programming on the station and contends that additional Commission evaluation of its programming content would violate the First Amendment. Commission staff continues to work to conclude the proceeding in a way that appropriately balances our statutory authority and the requirements of the station to serve the public interest for the benefit of the citizens of New Jersey.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Mignon L. Clyburn